



Applied Behavioral Rehabilitation Institute, Inc.
Homes for the Brave

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State of Connecticut Appropriations Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 2700
Hartford, CT 06106

February 17, 2022

Dear Appropriations Committee Members,

Greetings from all of us at ABRI/Homes for the Brave. Due to a scheduling conflict, I was unable to testify via Zoom yesterday but did want to get our request on the record.

Homes for the Brave opened in Bridgeport in 2002 to serve men experiencing homelessness with almost all of them being U.S. Military Veterans. In 2005, we opened a 9 bed permanent supportive home in Black Rock and in 2011 we opened the PFC Nicholas A. Madaras Home for Female Veterans (Female Soldiers: Forgotten Heroes) in the West End of Bridgeport, CT's only home exclusively for Female Veterans and their young children. We have a Walk-in, Drop-In Veterans Service Center, a Vocational Program that includes computer classes and in 2019, we started a Clinical Program headed up by Dr. Stephanie Lynam, a Clinical Psychologist. As I write this, we are working vigorously to open 2 houses in West Haven, CT to accept male Veterans experiencing homelessness as the VA approved transferral of the Program there from an out of state Operator to us on 12/13/21.

Additionally, we are expanding our Clinical Program and Veterans Service Center into an Annex in downtown Bridgeport at One Lafayette Square, Suite 100. This will enable us to serve even more Veterans AND their family members in need of assistance.

After being funded for many years at the \$180,000 to \$200,000 level out of the DOH budget, we were omitted completely in FY 2019 before reinserted in calendar year 2020 for \$100,000, which we were grateful for. Last year, our Bridgeport delegation worked very hard to secure inclusion in FY 2022 of \$100,000 from Federal ARP funds out of DECD's bucket.

As our FY 2023 State Budget is being created, we need to be included at a minimum of \$100,000 as we are serving the housing, vocational, and mental health needs of even more CT Veterans AND their families. We respectfully request inclusion in the FY 2023 CT Budget on behalf of the male and female Veterans that we will be serving 24 hours a day, 365 days a year at Homes for the Brave in BOTH Bridgeport and West Haven. Many of these Veterans are coming to us directly from the street or a prison cell and without the work we do would not be able to achieve permanent housing outcomes. We ask that you continue to partner with us in the work we do every day at a world class level. Please support our efforts by including us in the FY 2023 Connecticut State Budget and feel free to contact me at (203) 338-0669 with any questions.

Very Truly Yours,

Vincent Santilli, Chief Executive Officer